



STRETCH CODE COMPLIANCE

FUNDING ASSISTANCE

The Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code, an amendment to the building code that requires higher energy efficiency standards, will be in effect in Lowell beginning January 1, 2011. The City recognizes that although energy efficient buildings provide long-term cost saving there are additional up-front costs incurred that may not be offset by the added value of an energy efficient building. Therefore the City is offering \$250,000 in reimbursable grants to property owners who must meet the stretch code standard.

WHO IS SUBJECT TO THE STRETCH CODE

The Stretch Code (Appendix 120.AA to the MA Building Code) requires a higher standard of energy-efficiency for buildings. New residential or rehabbed buildings will be 15% - 35% more efficient than the current building code standards, while many renovations and additions will need to incorporate energy efficient building materials and practices to the affected portion of the building. Most new commercial construction requires approximately 20% greater efficiency than the base building code standard.

GRANT ASSISTANCE FROM THE CITY

Grant reimbursements are available to offset costs for consulting services required to certify energy standards are met and to offset a portion of capital costs of building to the Stretch Code. Combining the Stretch Code reimbursement with other resources available from utilities, state, and federal government will likely offset most if not all of the added cost of building to the Stretch Code. See the reverse page of this flyer for reimbursement details, and other resources available to property owners, and builders.

Property owners will need to submit a simple application and documentation to the Division of Development Services showing additional costs incurred from meeting the stretch code. Reimbursements will be made directly to the property owner once staff at the Division of Development Services is able to confirm work is complete.

RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

The following grants are available for new or rehabbed residential buildings, and/or additions:

- 50% of enhancement cost with a maximum grant distribution of \$2,000; max distribution to \$3,000 for buildings meeting the enhanced energy efficiency standard.
- The maximum grant may be increased by \$500 per unit for multi-family buildings. \$750 per unit for projects that meet the enhanced energy standard. Additional units must also include energy enhancements to qualify for additional funds.
- Up to \$500 per unit for consultant fees to certify stretch code compliance on rehab/additions/conversions¹.

Minimum Stretch Standard		
Project Type	Project Size	Energy Std.
New Construction	> 3,000sqft	65 HERS
Rehab/Addition	> 2,000sqft	80 HERS
Rehab/Addition	All	Prescriptive

Enhanced Energy Standard		
Project Type	Project Size	Energy Std.
New Construction	> 3,000sqft	55 HERS
New Construction	< 3,000sqft	60 HERS
Rehab/Addition	> 2,000sqft	70 HERS
Rehab/Addition	< 2,000sqft	75 HERS

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Grant reimbursements are available of \$.25 per square foot will be made available for construction of commercial buildings that must meet the Stretch Energy Code Standard.

OTHER AVAILABLE RESOURCES

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY RETROFIT LOAN PROGRAM

The City of Lowell has partnered with the Lowell Development Financial Corporation to develop and service a low interest loan program to support the cost incurred for energy efficient retrofits of existing residential buildings with between 1 to 4 residential units. Loans are available from \$5,000 to \$20,000, repaid over a 5 year term at a very low 1% interest rate. For more information contact the LDFC at 978-459-9899 or Aaron Clausen at 978-674-1422.

UTILITY INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

There are a number of incentive programs and technical assistance programs through National Grid (both electric and natural gas utility provider for Lowell). The MassSave web site (www.masssave.com) provides an overview of incentives and programs available to residential and commercial customers. Other specific utility programs addressing residential buildings include:

- The Massachusetts New Homes with Energy Star Program – offering grants from \$225 - \$8,000 per unit. All new residential construction in Lowell three stories or lower will be eligible for this program.
- Residential High Efficiency Heating Rebate Program – rebates of up to \$1,750 are available for efficient heating and water heating equipment.
- Major Renovations Program – provides homeowners renovating, remodeling, or making other home improvements with incentives of over \$2,000 for energy efficiency enhancements.
- Incentives for new construction of commercial buildings are available through www.masssave.com, and are generally designed to cover up to 75% of the incremental cost of high efficiency equipment.

Federal Tax Incentives

There are a number of Federal tax incentives promoting energy efficient and renewable energy technologies. The Tax Incentives Assistance Project (TIAP) provides an up-to-date review of available incentives and information on taking advantage of them; for more info go to <http://energytaxincentives.org/>

For a comprehensive overview of current energy efficiency and renewable energy resources check out the Database of Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency (www.dsireusa.org).

Contact:

City of Lowell
Division of Development Services
978-674-4144

¹ The Massachusetts New Homes with ENERGY STAR Program provides incentives to cover the cost of a HERS rater. Projects in Lowell will be eligible for \$1,750 grant reimbursement from Energy Star.